

BP 4030 Academic Freedom - Draft

Executive Committee Updated & Approved 4-21-26

Chairs Committee Endorsed 5-1-26

Academic Senate Approved 5-12-26

Academic freedom is the freedom to discuss all relevant matters in the classroom, to explore all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression, and to speak or write without institutional discipline or restraint on matters of public concern as well as on matters related to professional duties and the functioning of the college. Academic responsibility implies the faithful performance of professional duties and obligations, the recognition of the demands of the scholarly enterprise, and the candor to make it clear that when one is speaking on matters of public interest, one is not speaking for the institution.

The District has a responsibility to society to defend and maintain academic freedom, which is essential not only to examine controversial issues in the classroom, but also to ensure access to information required for the study of such issues and to allow for innovative and novel pedagogical practices. Accordingly, the District will provide all faculty with academic due process to address and resolve disputes related to academic freedom.

Academic freedom provides that faculty have control of methodology and use of technology, while staying consistent with institutional policies.

Furthermore, the District acknowledges that the pursuit of the institutional values of inclusion, diversity, equity, anti-racism, and accessibility (IDEAA) can necessitate, at times, uncomfortable conversations and that, in alignment with [Title 5](#) and under the protection of academic freedom, the District has the responsibility to defend faculty rights to integrate IDEAA into their course(s).

References:

Title 5, Sections [51023](#), [51201](#);

ACCJC Accreditation Eligibility Requirement [13](#);

ACCJC Accreditation Standard [4.1](#)

Current Text of BP 4030 Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is essential not only to examine controversial issues in an objective manner in the classroom, but also to insure access to information sources required for study of such issues. The intellectual search for transmission of knowledge should go forward in an atmosphere free from fear of reprisal, while providing opportunities for critical thinking and understanding of conflicting viewpoints. In order that special interests or conflicting public opinion not impede the educational process, instructors and students must be free to investigate, to form conclusions, and to express judgments and opinions. Academic freedom also includes the right to constructively criticize college policies without fear of retribution.

Academic freedom carries with it several responsibilities. Faculty members must strive for factual accuracy and show restraint in dealing with topics outside their area of expertise. While showing respect for the opinions of others, the instructor should, after impartial examination of the evidence, present the conclusions to which the evidence points. Selective omission of available data would not be in keeping with academic responsibility. Promotion of a partisan point of view to a captive audience would be equally unsuitable.

Members of the faculty, administration, college staff and student body should feel free to speak in public forums or write "Letters to the Editor" and write publicly without institutional censorship, as long as they indicate they are not acting as institutional spokespersons. The college has a responsibility to society to defend and maintain academic freedom to insure that educational goals can be achieved and that all fields of knowledge can be studied, discussed, and interpreted in an objective and scholarly manner.

References:

Title 5, Section 51023;
ACCJC Accreditation Eligibility Requirement 20;
ACCJC Accreditation Standard I.C.7

Adopted: December 4, 2000

Revised: